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STATE FOR GSPENCER, MLURIE

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TAGS: EAGR EAID ECON IT  
SUBJECT: GOI CLARIFICATION OF G8 L'AQUILA FOOD SECURITY  
COMMITMENTS

REF: STATE 120804

¶1. (U) Summary. A GOI official has reaffirmed the commitments made by Italy at the L'Aquila G8 meeting: Italy expects to provide USD 450 million for food security. End Summary.

¶2. (U) On 25 November ECONOFF conveyed the USG concerns regarding the food security commitments made at the L'Aquila G8 Summit (reftel) to Counselor Paolo Ducci, an official in the Development Cooperation Directorate General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ducci acknowledged receipt of the USG concerns and stated that he would respond formally by 3 December. Italy's funding will be coming from the Development Cooperation Directorate General not/not the Italian Development Corporation as stated in reftel. ECONOFF also said that it is the USG's goal to emerge from the Dec 3-4 meeting with these points clarified and stressed the need for a high-level Italian participant at the upcoming Kigali meeting.

¶3. (U) At a 2 December meeting with ECONOFF, Ducci confirmed that Italy's funding commitment for a three year period is USD 450 million. However, he insisted that the three year period is 2009 - 2011 not/not 2010 - 2012. He was unable to forecast Italy's level of funding for 2012.

¶4. (U) Ducci said that Italy's L'Aquila commitment is a combination of previously dedicated funds and new funding but was unable to provide a breakdown. He also stated that Italy's funding of its L'Aquila commitments is "ongoing" and that, "one hundred percent of Italy's funding will be in the form of grants".

¶5. (U) Ducci estimated that 80 percent of the USD 450 million will be distributed through multilateral organizations such as the FAO and the World Food Program. The remaining 20 percent will be distributed through direct bilateral channels. He said that Italy's bilateral funding will be directed primarily towards sub-Saharan Africa.

¶6. (U) Ducci said that the GOI will not/not send a representative to Kigali.

¶7. (U) Post POC for follow-up on this issue is Larry Gemmell.

¶8. (SBU) Comment. Paolo Ducci was very certain about the information he provided especially when ECONOFF questioned the funding time period. Given that Italy's L'Aquila commitment funding is "ongoing", and covers the three years 2009 - 2011, it appears that a significant portion of the USD 450 million will come from previously dedicated funds. Ducci refused to give an estimate when ECONOFF pressed for an approximation on the amount of new funding in Italy's commitment, He was also adamant about Italy's lack of

representation at the Kigali meeting and seemed to verify this information with a phone call during the meeting. End comment.

THORNE